



FRANCISQUE.



A TRAGEDY.



—BY—

LOUIS E. SALMON,

AND F. W. BALD, JR.



1884.

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ERRATA.

The reader should, with ink, make the following
corrections in the text before reading.

PAGE.	COLUMN.	LINE.	
3	1	15	Misgivings for misgiving.
3	1	23	Prophecy " prophesy.
3	2	48	Lineament " linement.
3	2	50	Here " hear.
3	2	51	Place comma after mother
4	1	25	Eyes for eyes.
5	2	26	Omit (.) after indeed.
5	2	34	Omit (.) after distinctly.
5	2	63	Crying for cryidg.
7	1	60	(.) after power and after own
			Omit (.) after grieve.
9	1	32	Place that before the.
12	1	10	Door for ooor.
14	2	29	Con- dited for concealed.
16	2	21	Curish for curism.
16	2	24	Omit & in rescue to one.
18	2	5	(.) after sister, Brutes for brute
18	2	34	Place (.) after what.
18	2	51	Grimy for grim.
18	2	54	Externe for external.



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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Madame Designiers.....
Pierre, her son.....
Francisque, her daughter.....
Louis Chesin, lover to Francisque.....
M. Robespierre, adventurer.....
Mouchet, accomplice of Robespierre.....
Marie, wife to Mouchet.....
Therese, his daughter.....
Landlord.....
A Servant of Louis.....
Peasant.....
Abductors.....

TMP 96-006650

FRANCISQUE.

SCENE.—At Paris and surrounding country.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A room of the Designers' house. Madame, working embroidery is meditative.

MOTHER.

It is—like a flash it breaks upon me,
Stirring my soul to inward agitation;
It is three years this day that Pierre did go,
In obedience to the call for freedom.
Three—long—years. Alas! sad forebodings
Take hold on me and try to make me theirs.
These misgivings I would fain shake off,
But am unable.
Hope! *you* have well-nigh forsaken me;
How oft when you had left me to dejection,
And to brooding o'er the gloomy future;
Did not Francisque, thy keeper, my dear daughter,
Restore you to me brighter than erewhile
Because of darkness that had gone before!
Pierre, Pierre, sad misgiving rise,
To taunt and mock me at thy prolonged absence;
Bitter, the war that took you from me; though
American liberty and independence
Well might seek the aid of foreign power,
And from France receive propitious answer;
As to fall, for such a cause, were to
Be wished—but God, why do I think of death!
Is it, by the fell prophesy, that witch
Of yore had foretold to my aged grandsire?
Again it does recur to me piercing
The mem'ry, when, her incantation done,
She blustered out this domineering insolence:

It is decreed that with your race,
Satanic evils shall keep pace.
There'll follow you both grief and pain;
Though here and there respite you'll gain.
And when about your race to end,
Shall misery, madness, murder, send.

O horrible and were my son.—

Enter FRANCISQUE. (gaily.)

FRANC. Why, dear mother, why that gloomy cloud
Spreading o'er your face serene and sweet?
It ill becomes you, away with it and give
Room for happier thoughts.

MOTH. (*sorrowfully.*) Ah Francisque, poor Pierre I'm
T'is he that occupies my thoughts by day
And night; save when your sprightly spirit shames
My despair, which, discomfited, straight makes off.
I would fain make room for happier thoughts
To take the place of these so sorrowful,
And heaped with anxious solicitude, Francisque;
But there are none such for me, I fear.

(*Franc. sits on hassock at mother's feet.*)

FRANC. And I know the reason of it, mother,
These happy thoughts would indeed approach;

But terrified and startled at your aspect,
So serious and so sad, they hasten off.
Were you but *once* to gladly welcome them,
They would quickly take possession of you
And force out all those grim and ghastly ones.
MOTH. Truly I doubt whether in the struggle
They would come off victorious; for remember
They are unceasingly of Pierre.

FRANC. While you nurse presentiments of ill.
I have but presages of joy to come.
I feel almost that he is present now;
I can see that cut upon his arm,
Inflicted by the cruel steel; that scar
Upon his brow, the warrant of the heroism
With which he defends the cause espoused.
I see him in all manly grace; tall,
Grand—mother, if you could but see him thus!

MOTH. What far-reaching prescience is yours,
My dear, would that you'll not be deceived.

FRANC. I'll not be I assure you,—
Mother, I'll to the garden and collect
Some flowers for you: nature's fragrant work.
The Lilly of the Valley shall first be ta'en;
For that denotes return of absent joy;
But the Lupine shall not be so favored;
Since hopelessness you have cast out and it
Is no more yours.

MOTH. Put there too the Rosemary, I pray;
For your presence ever revives me.

FRANC. Indeed! and the white violet and sweet pea,
And myrtle and what else there pleases me.

MOTH. Then I pray you don't forget the rose
And you know *he'd* like the color red.

FRANC. All right, t'is done as said. (*Exit.*)

MOTH. The dear child, how hopeful she is indeed.
Nothing is able to turn her will so fixed
And so determined, that in truth, I half
Believe that happiness will yet be mine.
If Pierre should come, now after three years.
Ah me! we have not heard from him in all
That time; something must indeed have happened.
That prevented him from writing to us.
Aye, something *has* befallen him.
All's silent as the grave concerning him.
To think, three—years he has been gone.
Ah Pierre, it is imprinted on my memory
Your form, your every feature when you left;
Every linement of your visage—

Francisque re-entering (concludes Mother's sentence.)

FRANC. Is hope itself. Yes, dear mother, hear they
Are mother not beautiful? (*After allowing mother to smile puts them in a vase.*)

By the way, I forgot to tell you
A pleasant dream that I last night enjoyed
And hope soon to be realized.

MOTH. Another presage, no doubt, of joy, even
Like the other, am I not right?

Well, let me share with you your dreaming prospect.

FRANC. Aye gladly,—Listen:

Amid a field of standing corn
 Bowing their heads to the inducing breeze,
 I lay, gazing upward to the heavens;
 Clouds in thick masses hung o'er head
 And at the place where they densest seemed,
 A rent disclosed a spirit sailing swift,
 Down, right toward me;
 Hovering there right before my very eyes
 He spoke: "Pierre, thy brother, is alive;
 Although pursuant death has just passed by.
 He will live and——"

MOTH. A dream my child, but a mirage oasis
 To tantalize me in the sterile desert
 Of my fearful anxieties.

FRANC. My dear mother, is it not possible,
 Nay, even probable, that my dream
 Is a harbinger of what's the future,
 Gradually to woo us to our joys;
 Rather than on a sudden to drown us
 In the torrent of coming happiness?
 The fate of Tantalus shall not be ours.

MOTH. Ah! my child, if——

FRANC. That this celestial dream of mine,
 Was given only to be gazed at and be
 Drunk in by thirsting eyes and devoured
 By greedy, starting stares.

Fear not, that, surrounded by the fruit
 Of our desires, we cannot enjoy them,
 The dream shall have substance that will feed
 Our hungry, waiting hopes.

MOTH. I am glad you think so; and do you know
 I almost feel the same as you? God bless
 Your dream and make it fruitful.

FRANC. Mother, have you not yet read my dream?
 Here it is, *see (holding up a letter.)* in truth a letter.

MOTH. Thank God!

FRANC. From your Pierre, I was in the garden
 When I beheld the courier coming in—
 Snatched the letter he extended, feeling
 In me it must be from him. Listen: *(reading it.)*

Dear Mother and Dear Francisque:—

By the grace of God you will see me soon. I
 am just arising from my sick bed at the hospital at
 Hampden.

Two years have I lain here, often at the point of
 death and at other times I was too weak to speak. I
 now awake to consciousness and strength sufficient to
 dictate to a dear friend these few words for you.

Thank God, I will very soon be able to see you
 both again. Dearest mother how I long for it.

Your ever loving

PIERRE.

MOTH. How acceptable this dream; ever
 Are you, the balm of my sorrowing heart,
 Francisque, may the Almighty quickly speed him.

FRANC. Amen, and in answer to your prayer
 Soon will he be here; for looking at the date,
 Tis evident that seven months have passed
 Since it was sent.

MOTH. Ah happy day.—Let's now to tea. *(excunt.)*

PIERRE *(enters from his journey.)*

What! no one here! so it seems;

They have I see retreated in advance.

I will indeed surprise them. Why it is
 Three years I've been away; yet I hardly
 See a change; the old clock in the corner
 Still ticks away in equal measured accents.—
 Index of all time, how often have you
 Made your circle, since last you saw me here?

(setting down his bundles.)

This luggage here is somewhat strange I know;
 But so am I and thus we are on level ground,
 I will near time learn to know you better.
 I wonder now when they received my letter;
 Whether they expect me, about this time;
 Or have waited anxiously; or in

The future wait me to come home.

(Picking up a book.)

This book I've seen a hundred times,
 It's full of sentimental rhymes.
 How comes it that she reads it now,
 Her heart is lost I vow—I vow

(Picks up embroidery.)

Is it mother's or Francisque's

I'll away and there it rests. *(Throws it down.)*

Exit.

SCENE II.

Scene same as Scene I.

(Enter Pierre and Francisque followed by Mother.)

FRANC. Well, young man you have till now neglected
 To render an account of your adventures.

Doubtless, they are of a startling nature.

(Fran. sits facing the window, opening on the garden.)

PIER. Then immediately, my dear Francisque,
 With your good will, I'll make reparation.
 From the moment Neptune hailed us, will I
 In pithy speech, recount my bold exploits;
 For such you seem bent on calling them.

The voyage was a very pleasant one
 As fiery thoughts did battle with the billows;
 Arriving at our destination in eight

Weeks from our departure, near two months
 Previous to the defeat of Cornwallis,

At that now far famed siege of Yorktown,

In which the enthusiastic young men

Of our regiment had the infinite pleasure

Of taking part, as they expressed it,

When we were ordered up against the foe.

FRANC. You then took part in the decisive battle?

PIER. Yes, I raised my hand and they did flee.

FRANC. Did they that very thing performed indeed?

PIER. That shameful deed did they in truth accom-
 plish.

MOTH. I'm glad to see you in this humour Pierre;
 But yet of serious things do not make light.

PIER. You are in the right, my mother dear,

Now I'll tell all that you desire me to

And satisfy e'en you, Francisque.

Speaking of my humour it reminds me

That t'was no pleasant humour, when wounded,

I was borne to the hospital.

MOTH. Ah, tell us how that came about my son.

PIER. T'was near the termination of the war.

After the enemy's

Surrender, our company was sent west,

Where sad havoc and butchery, by the foe,

Allianced with a tribe of Indians, was being

Perpetrated.

Here, prostrated by the intense heat

Of that western country's sun, want

Of our former stinted rations and by

Wounds from the poisoned arrows of those fiends,

My shattered health gave way.

MOTH. *(Aside.)* Poor boy!

PIER. I was then from place to place conveyed

In uncovered wagon with others wounded;

Untold pains being suffered thus,

And almost every ill imaginable,

Till Hampden's hospital caused part relief;

Unconscious was I long periods of my stay,

Therefore unable to write sooner to you.

MOTH. Son, the Lord has kindly saved you for us.

PIER. Aye, it was through the grace of God, that with

But few others of the many patients,

I survived the war and wasting illness.

MOTH. Praise God for his everlasting kindness!

FRANC. Tis true, Amen, and for the termination

Of this direful war, in which the Spartans

Of America have won their noble end.

PIER. Considering all they are a brave nation.
Yes, America is a nation on the earth.
Laudations for their courage and bold daring!
But like some at home there are queer ones
Too among them.

FRAN. Ah!—I should like to hear of their
Peculiarities. T'would be agreeable.

PIER. I can not tell a great deal; their tongue
At first was strange to me; but as a people
They are kind, industrious in peace;
Though in war they fight like very demons.
Like tornadoes they rush upon the foe
And are most times as destructive,
Three cheers, cry I, to American valor. [France.]

FRAN. And three for Rochambeau, DeGrasse and
MOTH. Let your enthusiasm now subside,

My warriors bold, brave scions of our house,
And tell me of their lives—their habits.
Are the customs there the same as ours?
Are they a phlegmatic people?

PIER. Far indeed are they from this nature.

They have more of that excitability
For which we, the French, are noted.

As I said they are quick and active.
Those I noticed who went not to war,
Busied themselves about their farms and fields
And served the country with the fruit they bore.
They toiled from Aurora's first appearance
Till she resumed her watery couch again.

By the way, thinking of queer ones there,
After I was allowed to leave my bed,
I came across a strange old oddity,
Who, however, gave me good advice;
Him, fate had favored with an imperfection
Much to his profit;—'twas curiosity.
Very soon it became insufferable
And then I sought to put an end to it.

(Mother going out says:)

MOTH. Curiosity; listen to the sequel Francisque.
(Exit.)

PIER. On some occasions it put him in a frenzy.
At first, he wonders if they have diamond bath-tubs
Up in heaven and if from one single
Plate of diamond they are formed.
Whether fair angels there would tender him,
Sweet ambrosia and delicious nectar
And robe him in purple garments at his bath.
Then I, surprised at his infirmity,
Would grow aware of his descent to earth
At finding his hand most stealthily
Curious of the contents of my pocket.
Now thought I his whim takes a strange turn
And for excuse of this so *curious* act,
He'd say, "we should seek wisdom everywhere."

FRAN. And when you would upbraid him for it?

PIER. Then in patronizing air: "my son
Wisdom may be gotten from a fool."

FRAN. Ha, Ha! good man! he proved conclusively
That you were not the fool. For he extracted
Not from you the wisdom of your pocket;
Though he did that of your head.

However, he meant not that kind, I assure you.

PIER. Did you ever hear of such a case?

FRAN. Ah yes, one somewhat similar and on
Comparison of the two, cannot but conclude
That your old man is the father of him.
This one too you will surely meet.

PIER. O! I hope not. I pray not.

FRAN. Your prayer is in vain; you *will* meet him.
The reason I believe he is of the same
Family as your curious reverend,
Is, that each is distinguished by some trait
Which is conspicuous over any other
They may chance to have.
I'll tell you the touch of nature which

Pronounces this one, in order that you may know him,
As soon as he comes in contact with you.

The secret is: he thinks himself a painter,
Though he has never touched nor brush nor paint,
He imagines if he were so inclined
He could surpass all in this art.

PIER. But does not the fantasy unfit him
For other labor? I should think that *work*
And such ideas were incompatible.

FRAN. No indeed, on the contrary, he is very apt;
And for that reason only is he tolerated.

PIER. He is tolerated is he—not much by me.

FRAN. We shall see. But Pierre, how glad we are
That you're returned, but do you know that I
Have had perfect faith in it, I felt it.

Pierre, Fortune has raised from us a weighty
Load in leading you home into our midst.

But oh! a heavier one I fear will take
Its place. Mother says the storm will rise
Before we shall have reached our mortal end.

All France she says will cower 'neath its rage.

PIER. Pray tell me, Miss Prophetess, what makes
[say so.]

FRAN. Ah dear Pierre, do not deride me thus,
Sufficient causes every day exist
That make us think so. Troublesome times indeed.
Are these. It was but yesterday that Louis
Did tell us of a man the name of whom—

*(She is silent thinking she hears something in
the garden.)*

PIER. Why are you silent?—What is it?

FRAN. Did you not hear a noise as of a body falling?

PIER. No indeed, sister, I heard nothing.

FRAN. I'm almost sure I did,—so distinctly.
As if I had seen it.

PIER. It is nothing, for I'm gifted with keen
Ears and would have heard it.

(Goes to the window and looks out.)

Nothing as I said. You were remarking
That your Louis spoke of a man whose name—

FRAN. Oh yes I remember now. I said
Louis told mother and me that his name
Before long time would pass, would be known
Through all the country round; ambition is
The god he does worship and which to gain
Would make all things quickly stoop to his
Imperious will; and steep his soul in crime.

PIER. Dear sister, I see now why you were startled
A moment since; you have been thinking
Deeply on the state of affairs

You are relating to me. Your fertile fancy
Has conjured up something to frighten you.

FRAN. *(Ironically.)* You are observant brother dear;
But he likewise said to us that though
Now but little known and quite obscure,
He'll soon have men to bless and some to curse him.
His name is Rob—

PIER. Why—he will indeed do serious harm
If there be not those to circumvent him
But tell me, who is this Louis your confidant?

FRAN. *(blushing)* An old acquaintance Louis Chesin.

PIER. Ah! is he not a very dear—

Francisque screams and points toward the window crying:
FRAN. Pierre—see— *(rushes out.)*

(Pierre hurries into the garden.)

SCENE III.

The Designiers' garden with the house at the side, over which climbs the mistletoe

SUNSET.

PIER. What could so have agitated her?
I see no one. An illusion it was no doubt
Caused by thoughts of these perplexing times.
And yet methinks I heard retreating footsteps;
But certainly I have deceived myself.
Still it is quite singular how her look
Of horror burns its way into my heart.
I'll look again.
Some one may be secreted in that clump of
Bushes—No, 'tis nothing how foolish I am
To think so. I'll go in and allay her fears
As best I might. But that look! I'll ne'er
Forget it. (*Going to the window he sees a letter beneath it.*
Ah, and what is this? (*picking it up.*)
What! a letter! Francisque must have dropped it,
I'll—but perhaps by some one else,
What! is it possible that this has indeed
Connection with Francisque's fright?
Yes, yes, I see—she was startled by something
At the window, she saw a form
Peering in on her at the window place.
She is right, that form has dropped this note.
But what can the intention be? For whom
Is it? And why delivered in such a manner?
If for Francisque, why have such a bearer?
One that has terrified and startled her.
The only way to get at it is to
Open it, whether it may be
For good or ill; at all events I'll know,
And I alone, if from friend or foe. (*Opens.*)
Louis:

The bearer of this is Jean Freinil. Do you
Know that there will soon be need to use him?
Ha! Ha! to think of our last undertaking!
How nicely we slip through and not a shadow
Cast upon your spotless reputation.
Speaking of Jean, he is henceforth my messenger.
Sooner than endanger me, as for
Instance by this letter, he'd gulp it down
And swear by all the gods, boiled kittens are not
Good for dinner, they do beget a choking
In the throat. Apropos, are you
Pushing home that little game of yours?
Will she soon yield her reluctant citadel?
Pull through, Louis, 'twill aid our present plan.
And now adieu; on hand at 10 to-night.

M. R.

What can this mean?
Have matters come indeed to such a pass?
'Tis but as they have told me. (*Looking at the paper.*)
Louis—Louis—
Is written to, Louis who? Louis Chesin?
No, away foul thought! I'll not harbour you,
And it reads: 'will she soon yield her reluctant
Citadel? To whom does *she* refer?
Francis—
No, I'll not think of it. And signed M. R.
Our Louis is good and virtue personified.

(*Reading the letter.*)

"And Louis not a shadow
Cast upon your spotless reputation."
What! Louis treacherous? 'tis false.
A cursed lie.
The whole, I swear, a base fabrication.
Not unintentionally dropt; but with
Bold design and evil placed there. (*Putting away.*)
I'll keep it and watch developments.
If such a thing were possible to Louis,
What advantage would there be, or gain,
By such a course as is here depicted?
None; which shows the worth of this base

Label; it has no power to make me suspect
The noble and the artless; by this I know
That some conspiracy is being hatched
And the author thereof the writer of this.

(*Taking it out.*)

M. R. Who can that rascal be?
Warily will I get it from Francisque;
For 'tis obvious she knows something of him;
Since he's so well acquainted with our affairs
I'll get it from her, that she know nothing of it.

(*Enter Mother and Francisque.*)

PIER. (*Laughing.*) Ha! Ha! since when are you ac-
To be terrified at nothing? [*customed.*]

FRAN. No, No I am assured that what I saw
Was real; no deceptive fantasie,
But a horrible reality.

PIER. (*Laughing.*) Francisque, what, may I ask, was
The horrible reality? Was it
Possessed of shape or did it float in air
Endowed with horrid figure and strange form?

FRAN. O heaven, how it shook my very senses,
And made them leap and wildly rush about me.
I was talking there, you know Pierre,
When I saw peering through the window on me
A man's ugly visage; it was
Marked with a devilish grin as if he had
Accomplished some fell purpose and was chuckling
With delight at its success; so it seemed
To me, in that moment that I saw it,
How my blood grew cold; had you not been
There I could not have moved. I shall never
Till my last day forget it.

MOTH. In truth, my child; this is as I feared,
Exciting thoughts have overturned
The balance of your mind so well centered.

FRAN. Would that I could think the same
But 'tis impossible. (*She with Pierre sits on one bench; the mother on another opposite.*)

PIER. Francisque, is there cause for your persistence?
Is there ought that you keep hidden? Such
Thing only could justify your strange belief.

MOTH. No, 'tis but as we have said and now
I'll leave you, Pierre, to dispel her fears,
And in short space I'll join you. (*Exit.*)

FRAN. I'm pleased that mother coincides with you;
For 'twould put a load upon her hard to bear.
And such anxiety would undermine
Her health still more; and yet I'm fearful
Lest harm may come of this.

PIER. Tush. Francisque, imaginations are
Such wily articles and at once
So fitful, that they ingratiate
Themselves within us and soon
Cause us to cringe to them in servile terror.
So believe me, you will see no more
Of your grim, startling apparition;
Unless you desire it, when as
Aladdin's genie, it stands before you.

FRAN. Pierre, I make to you this proposition,
Which anyone cannot but call fair:
If nothing more is heard of what I saw,
And no trace of his vile form is found,
I'll renounce my firm belief as visionary;
So strongly do I believe this sight
Is the forerunner of ones to come,
Growing out of this and still more horrible.

PIER. I'm very glad to hear your determination;
For I'm persuaded this is the last of it.
And therefore, now, let us to something else.
You remember that you spoke of Louis,
I recall him to my memory now
As we sat all together that last evening.
Is he the same old jolly fellow?

FRAN. That he is; but still at times I see
When he is absent minded and vacant in his
Look; as he were engaged in serious
Thought, or some trouble held him; but these
Moments are very rare, otherwise
He is the same.

PIER. (*Artfully.*) 'Tis somewhat strange that he is
And absorbed in deep reflection; yet [absentminded,
He may have in mind some pursuit
That requires attentive care.

FRAN. No, I think he's brooding over troubles
Looming up in the political
Horizon; and these affect him, you know
I mentioned who would be—

PIER. (*Aside.*) 'Twas signed M. R. (*Then to Fran.*)
Did you not say his name, Maurice Ritanle?

FRAN. No indeed, it is Maximilian Robespierre.

PIER. (*Starts.*) Ah!

FRAN. What is it? Do—

PIER. Did not some one call?

(*Behind the low garden wall, in the lane, drunkards are staggering about. A little girl enters the lane on the opposite side, playing a violin. She is assaulted by the drunkards.*)

FRAN. I heard nothing; but perhaps—

(*The girl cries for help, Louis enters the lane and says to the drunkards.*)

LOU. Here cowardly dogs, run off or I'll
Make this your last prey and short work of you.

FRAN. That is my Louis, Louis. (*Grasping Pierre's arm.*)

PIER. Be calm Francisque, let me go and—

(*One man stabs Louis in the arm, girl screams help, Pierre loosens the hold of Francisque who runs into the house, then he hustles into the lane. The drunkards make off. The girl thrown down is being carried into the house by Pierre. Louis walks into the garden.*)

LOU. But to whom am I indebted for this
Timely aid; had it not been for you—
What! Pierre is it you!

PIER. Aye, in flesh and blood and truly glad
To see you Louis; yet not glad to see you
Bloody as you are; a serious wound
The fellow gave you, and the crimson stream,
Flowing quickly through the ugly rent,
Would make one's loving heart at once to bleed
Through pity at beholding such a sight,

(*Binding with a kerchief.*)

So for the moment let me bind it
That Francisque see not the ghastly wound;
And now I'll take this little girl within
To be cared for there; then quick to you
I come with bandage that shall staunch the blood.

(*Taking girl from the seat where he had placed her, he is about to enter when Francisque returns.*)

FRAN. O Louis! Louis! you are hurt, cruel blood is

PIER. Francisque see, she's unconscious [oozing—
While—no use, there is but one magnet
And that is Louis; 'tis best leave them alone. (*Exit.*)

LOU. And have these drops the power my own to
Thy gentle heart; then speedily to tears [grieve.
They are transformed weeping at thy pain.
Ah! what efficacy in them lies

When a few red drops, all too unworthy
To be viewed by you, so rudely chase
The blooming roses from thy cheeks, and blanch
Them with solicitous anxiety.

Thrice happy blood that hath unwittingly
Revealed the love that maidenly reserve
Could ne'er have forced itself to tell, though being.
I pray thee deny it not, my bold words

Pardon, then this red mediator suing
Thus to thee, will quick seal up this gap
And joyful to my heart will backward bound
And there be treasured as thy priceless gift.

FRAN. Louis, bid it quickly backward course for I
Must obey my heart's dictates. Yet how
Could I play the hero seeing blood?
How *could* one but pale at that copious
Effusion, seeming never to find end?

Therefore to this you must indeed attribute
My terror, which still holds possession of me.

LOU. My own Francisque, with thy dear lips'
First utterance, the music of the spheres
Could scarce compare, though celestial beings
Are wont in ecstasies to fall on hearing it.
Yet my love, heaven is where thou art,
And thy smile the sun illumining it;
But when away, this world's a desert drear
And life vapid, sunless, dark and cold
Then let—(*He falls back unconscious.*)

FRAN. Why Louis what is the matter? are you—
O heaven! curses on him who with murderous blade—
O rally! revive! first his profuse bleeding, which
excessive loss of blood weakened him—help Pierre
come the wound has burst open, he became exhausted
by his speaking, O dear Louis, wake up come,
because of worthless me has your strength been
spent, Louis! Dear Louis,—in molding golden words,
(*Pierre enters supplied with bandages.*)

PIER. Well, at last the little girl has regained con-
sciousness and is now—but what is wrong here, has
the wound opened? And he unconscioustoo—quick,
some water please. (*Exit Francisque.*) what great
censure do I not deserve for my remissness, how can
I reprove myself sufficiently for this neglect?—but
I'll soon make amends, there—

(*Finish bandage on his arm.*)

And once more I see life returning
And his eyes ope to consciousness

(*Enter Fran with water.*)

Here Louis, this will quickly set you right.

(*Louis having drunk it.*)

LOU. I can myself scarce comprehend wherefore
This exhibition of unmanly weakness
But for which I trust I am forgiven;
Not? (*Looking at Francisque.*)

FRAN. When my imposed condition you fulfill.

LOU. And that is?

FRAN. Ne'er to let the cause of it again
Occur and thereby ne'er to grieve me more.

LOU. That it has so harshly touched you, pains me
More than fifty thousand gasbes could.
But Pierre, what of your little charge? I fear
Lest self-occupied I neglect others:

PIER. She has recovered consciousness; but I
Fear has been roughly handled for she
Is utterly exhausted and so feeble
She scarce could give her name, Therese Mouchet,
Notwithstanding by great strain and effort
She anxiously inquired for her rescuer.
So now let us go in, to her and mother.

(*While Louis and Francisque are going into the house, Pierre says aside:*

PIER. 'Tis hardly credible that he be false,
How can he after such a noble act?
Yet this note (*touching it*)—and of a guise like this.
Exit.

SCENE IV.

A hut in the slums of Paris.

Robespierre enters by means of a key. Then he locks the door; lights three candles, placing two in the window behind the red curtain as a signal.

ROBE. There—I hope he'll slap his greedy eye On that. Avarice will compel him to Unless he is so drunk he cannot see. 'Tis queer indeed, that he is most successful In his vilest act when beastly drunk. For my part I can scarce believe it. It would seem to me, that his brain would Become so sluggish that there could not flow out The clever plans to promote his wicked end, Wicked! rather devilish villainies. Ha! ha! but that's the man for me, And for my purpose. I wonder how he fared. It was quite a dangerous operation

(Puts another chair to the table.)

To be sure; but Mouchet knows his pocket And how best to fill it with the stocking Stones; and so I wager he has done it. Well I must now administer something To his wants and thereby will promote The cause of loud mouthed temperance, For if I get him not something warm to drink, He'll be as sullen and as barren as A sterile mare; well I'll not begrudge it him. I'll be repaid a hundred fold, ha! ha! *(getting liquor.)* But did the idiot get the letter! How then; his mind against Louis is embittered As the stinging caustic galls the flesh; And that's just to my purpose: By these incentives I will goad him on To think this Chesin a treacherous devil And then my dear Louis, where'll be Francisque? Ho! ho! by that time I'll have her so fast That one could think we are Gordian tied. Then all will be mine; revenge on this Devilish fool Chesin.—mine—Francisque And the money coming by it, ha! ha! And so far has worked *(hesitating)* the plot but to My benefit;—but if— If what, you quaking, pale faced coward! Wash it down *(he drinks)* ah, That's the color of it, bright, sparkling, Fierce as the wild-cat, tearing one's fears Into ten thousand atoms. Well, when will he arrive? If he play me False, by heaven, 'twill take ten years to gather His remains. Much I fear he can Be bought by promise of a larger sum,

(Enter Mouchet (Stealthily).)

He's of that nature, but let me once but have Mine end and he shall seek some higher realm To vaunt his internecine qualities, As on this world he'd be an unsafe animal; I wonder if his brain, so fertile in odd Jobs like these, can devise a plan By which I might gain possession of her.

(Mouchet advancing to the table.)

MOU. It can be done, it is not hard to do; I have begun and I shall shove it through.

ROBE. How are you here, in what way did you enter?

MOU. Does it not concern you how I fared In my new trade of courier? He has the letter.

ROBE. I did not hear you come in—

MOU. Great wonder is there at it. I did see The signal in the window. Here I be.

But I beg your pardon; my curiosity Is aroused; no doubt that jug contains Some—milk? does it not?

ROBE. Yes, highly flavored pure burgundy milk. They told me it is rich and old; but not A jot will I believe, until I have Your judgment on the matter. I pray you taste it.

MOU. I—I—dost care to—I—

ROBE. Nonsense, have no such scruples; I beg you Give me your opinion of it.

MOU. Well—then, I'll merely taste it.

(He drinks half the contents.)

ROBE. *(Aside.)* Good heavens;

MOU. Yes, it's fairly good; at any rate It is not bad and you're the lift for me.

ROBE. *(Aside.)* That you'll later see. *(Aloud.)* but the Did you watch him, as he read the letter? [letter,

MOU. When does the toying cat fling by the mouse?

No sooner I. He read the letter and at Short intervals did cry: "the filthy wretch, The dog, the venom-toothed reptile; ah! But I will have revenge. I'll rip from out His lying breast the confession coming slow, And kick him from the earth."

Then thanked he timely Providence and poured Out benediction that the villain was Unmasked and so I left the cully.

ROBE. We'll have you performed and well merit Your reward that I'll doubly increase For your success to which I drink.

(He drinks and extends to Mouchet.)

MOU. In thanks I'll take a little sip from it. *(He drinks all, then overturns it to see if any more is there.)* Its very good, but it is not honest To have a false bottom on a thing like that. Yet its rareness is only exceeded by my Cunning artifice and bravery.

ROBE. Then what step next is proper to our end? Can not your understanding see at once?

MOU. Once more I act and she is in your hands.

ROBE. Friend, I hear you're noted for quick work, But tell me how you'll grasp the nettle now?

MOU. *(Heartlessly.)* With a heavy hand. Listen! it Two days since that Therese was beset [was Upon the road by drunkards; she was beaten Sorely; but rescued and carried to A house that stood near by. It is Dessigniers.' The same night, learning from my child Who her mother is, they sent her word To come and stay by Therese; as the latter In her present state, if moved, would die. This she did. And now, my bon confrere— Look here, that sample stuff was fairly good, Let me see your other and I'll tell you— But mind, in confidence, if it's the same.

ROBE. I see you are the same.

MOU. Being the same, so much am I the better Able to judge the same; for were I different, The liquor too would be in—different kind of— And consequently not for me.

(Robe, has brought the liquor.)

And consequently 'tis for me, I mean— To worm from her such information I may Need and though with cause she her fate deploras, Two days let pass and she is yours.

ROBE. A bold design, which may fortune favour, You know what awaits you when it is done.

MOU. Yes chum, I know all that, but I cannot Drink the milk of expectation, nor fill My hungry gorge upon siren hopes, Nor sleep without hard gold beneath my head; So, my brother suppose you give me something Now—just to satisfy me—something small. Say but a few hundred.

ROBE. What, you fool, I tell you I cannot now;

But remember, the sooner your part's accomplished
The quicker you'll have your franes and
A nice big sum there'll be.

MOU. To all of which I do agree, but hear—
Listen, I must see a part of that
Nice big sum, now, do you hear, I've done
Enough already to merit half the pay,
And if I were so inclined as to
Ascribe my doings to you, how would—
Oh no! don't start—I meant nothing,
You'll give it to me won't you?

ROBE. Yes, (*Aside*) curse him.

MOU. Certainly I'll curse him and gratis too,
"As on this world he'd be an unsafe animal!"

ROBE. What did you remark? Where did you—

MOU. Oh, that's all right, we are now becoming
Well acquainted with each other, but how
About the—

ROBE. Look here my friend, I'm in a little trouble
Now, wait until tomorrow night
And you shall have it.

MOU. I'd like to accommodate a friend;
But am myself a little pressed and there
Is a man from whom I could—oh, yes,
You know him—but you'll please lend me four or
Five hundred franes this evening.

ROBE. Certainly if you wish it.
And I swear to you that by your deed,
If successful, you'll make that much that you'll
Consider me more liberal to yourself
Than me, for it is not especially
The money that I prize, but the that power
Of revenge is given me, for that
Louis of hers, I hate the dog; and I
Most completely vent my spleen upon him.
When I snatch her from him, appropriating
Her to my own use. Were I to kill him—
Bah! his sorrow and all would be at an end.
But to make him live and deprived
Of her whom he values more than life—
Ah! that's the vengeance I will take. He'll drag
Out his cursed life in unfulfilled
Desires and longings ever unsatisfied.
So you see the money is not the prime
Cause, for which I now am striving.

MOU. But for me, it *is* the prime cause
For which I strive and which I'll not be foiled in.

ROBE. To cheat you is furthest from my thoughts
And to prove it here is a check (*writing*) for four hun-
dred franes.

MOU. (*Reading*.) Is this worth four hundred franes?

ROBE. Certainly it is—

MOU. Then please change it for me and give its
ROBE. I— [worth.

MOU. (*Commandingly*.) Change it—

ROBE. If you would rather have it in change
Why here it is; no difference to me.

(*Mouchet taking it.*)

MOU. Ah! le creme de le creme, and it too
Is a gentle rain, that falls upon
My fertile mind, which will soon bear
Luscious fruit, in shape of ready plans.

ROBE. It pleases me to find you're such a fruitful
Garden; now you know how you will fare
If you succeed.

MOU. That I do, and for that reason I'll
Make haste to carry out my scheme. For 'tis vice
That speeds me to my madame in a trice. *Exit.*

ROBE. I hardly know to rate him; bull or bear,
Will I *par* him, or he *horn* me in air?
At any rate there's nothing I'll not dare. *Exit.*

SCENE V.

Room of Mouchet's house—very poor.
Marie at work, cleaning the room.

MARIE. Dark midnight with his giant strides is fast
Now coming on; but still Therese appears not,
Ah me! Has some accident occurred,
Or has again a mean assault been made
By drunken loafers on thy fragile form?
Oh, what anguish I have suffered since
The squandering of that marriage gift, by my
Indolent husband; and since you were hustled
Into the streets of Paris,

Violin in hand to seek a livelihood,
For your stony hearted parent; while he
Wastes his time about the club and in
The low grog shops, spending our hard earned sons—
(*A knock at the door.*)

A visitor! what does one wish at so—
Does he bring news of Therese, or her bleeding body?
God forbid—come in—

(*Enter Landlord with a bow; a slim shabbily dressed old man, his form bent and voice cracked.*)

LAN. Madame, I beg your pardon for having dropped
In at this time; but I saw you had your
Lamp still burning—as I was passing here,
And so I thought I would step in to see
Monsieur about some private business.

MAR. Take a seat, please, I expect he will
Be here after a while. (*Eyeing him sharply.*)

(*He sits down writing in a note book, about the furni-
ture, etc.*)

MAR. (*Aside.*) Come, a new difficulty which I
Have not foreseen. But who can this—

(*Turning around she sees him making notes.*)

What! yes, oh heaven! that is the landlord,
He's taking an account of what we have.
Ah! I see Henri expected this man
To come and for that reason told me, he would
Not be at home for any one to night.
I'll carry out his wishes for him.

How can I fix it? Yes, I'll do this!—
When Therese comes home I'll send her—
'Twill take only a few minutes, round to
The club and— (*Enter Therese violin in hand.*)
Ah Therese, why stayed you so late?

THER. A good lady sent me on an errand
And it took me thus long to get back.
Look! She gave me this money for it— *Landlord runs
to look at it.*

MAR. She was indeed a good lady.
But my dear if you are not too fatigued,
Go, please, to the club and tell papa
A gentleman's here to see him, go quickly
For 'tis late. (*Exit Therese.*)

MAR. (*Aside.*) My child, you are indeed worthy a
Lot than this.— [better

Now I shall fix it for him. When she returns
And states: he had been gone two hours from there,
Then he'll not wait here any longer.

Ha! Ha! he little thinks my husband sleeps
Not ten feet from where he's sitting. I'm glad
He is now in a drunken stupor, for
Else there'd be something I'd not like to see.
But I fear he might awake, no, no,
I cannot risk it. 'Tis time to end the farce.

(*To the Landlord angrily.*)

Sir! at what time do you retire?

LAN. Ah! I—I guess as soon as I get rich,
Which looks like it would never be, because
People never pay the rent due me.

MAR. Oh,—you old fool. I meant what time do you
Gather together your withered carcass

(*Throwing the paper into the fire.*) Dessignier's house.
Is to be sold in a short space of time.
How does it strike you as our future home?
Are the gardens cultivated, the vineries trimmed?
Are there spacious halls and vestibule?
Tell me something of it, that I may judge
Whether it will yield the delights that I
Intend for you.

MAR. (*Surprised.*) Indeed, I was not aware of their
Well, its a pretty little house of eight [intention.
Sunny rooms. Four on a level; a broad passage
Extends from front to rear facing two
Each side. To the dormitory window spreading,
Climbs the stout and verdant mistletoe.
And so dense, man's weight it might support.

MOT. (*Aside.*) Ah! 'tis good,—It's working. (*Aloud.*)
But do they think it safe to keep their money there?

MAR. Well I—O! villain! rascal! is this the source
You think to fill your *new* dusty [from which
Coffers? O Go! that I—

MOT. (*Angrily.*) Hush, woman, some one might hear

MAR. I will not be silent, I will— [you.

MOT. You shall fool, or I'll—

*He knocks her down with something. Showing her insens-
ible body with his foot he staggers out.*

(*Enter Therese.*)

TIER. Mamma, I went to the club and they—
*Seeing mother on the floor, she rushes to her, and crouches
down.*

Mamma! Mamma!

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Scene, same as Scene I. Act I.

PIER. (*Earnestly and somewhat excitedly.*)
Ever since, under kind fate's guidance,
This note, I have discovered, at once the charge
And proof conclusive of foulest perfidy
Premeditated, have I struggled madly
Not to give credence to this obvious truth;
But now those old feelings are o'erpowered.

(*Aroused.*)

Let act succeed on dilatory thought
(*Thoroughly aroused.*)

And quick, else deception artfully
Veneered with truthfulness and holy love
May find success in its fell purposes.
And dear Francisque—no more delay—
I'll act to-night—at once—to Chesin's house
I'll go and demand an explanation—
But Francisque must know naught until—
*While intending to leave the room there enters Francisque
with Louis' servant.*

FRAN. Ah Pierre, I thought I might find you here.
Servant begins to search the room.

But you are flushed—

PIER. With surprise at his impertinence;
But who is he, our visitor so curious?
Is there aught ailing him, is he deranged?

(*Servant eyeing Pierre a moment.*)

SERV. Nothing ails me; and yet I do recall that,
For as the loss of glowing spirits ails one;
So the loss of an umbrella, me;
Or my master, which is all the same,

In other words, I announce to you
The decease, sudden and unlooked for,
Of an umbrella, stone dead to its master;
But which I believe is alive and healthy,
Here, in this abode, and its ribs
As visible and strong as my old horse's.
It's here, why didn't you return it to him?

PIER. Is he sane?

SER. Here am I a painter and a painter's boy com-
pelled to seek after such things alive or dead, as stray
from my master's studio like sheep without a shep-
herd or rather blindly lead away by wolves in sheep's
clothing.

PIER. (*Angrily.*) This impudence and familiarity, is
monstrous, shocking, Scamp, out of the house!

(*Servant terrified runs out.*)

FRAN. Pierre, Pierre, you've been too harsh with him
But it is my fault, I should have told you.
Don't you recall Old Curiosity—
America's? This is his youthful picture.

Servant enters unobserved and renews his search.

PIER. To endure such conduct is beyond me.
And from a mere servant, why Francisque!

FRAN. Well well, time effects everything
And Pierre, I wish to drive away that frown
To which nothing is more efficacious
Than this rare mignonette, so beautiful,
*She takes him smiling to opposite part of the room, where
stands the flower in a vase.*

SER. (*Aside.*) They hid it, as I'm to be a Raphael
And only to give me trouble bless them.
Do they wish to keep it?—

He sees flowers in a vase near him.

Flowers, I wonder if they intend them for me but I
want the umbrella, I don't want the flowers.

*Throwing them they hit Pierre on the head, Pierre seiz-
ing him by the collar shakes him.*

PIER. Here, fool, what do you mean!

FRAN. (*Interfering.*) Pierre do nothing rash; but
Remember this is his august self the painter.
The youthful image of your New World's friend.

SER. Aye, you have guessed rightly, I am his majesty.
But where have you heard of me before?
Has my fame preceded me ere I have won it?
I presume you are the one who went
To fight across the way, o'er the ocean.
So you've heard of me there; in what connection
If I may ask, not yet as a painter?

PIER. I met a relation of yours over there,
A father I should think.

SER. Ah no he won't. He claims no such thing
If I know it. My father's dead and now
When I'm about to be the living artist
Of the world and win unbounded fame
And show the world the mettle I am made of—

PIER. I plainly see the metal you are made of.
Your cheek is brass, your brain is surely leaden.

FRAN. Keep on Pierre, you'll soon transform him to
A saturnine race horse or a metallic mummy.

PIER. Could I by any means fulfill the last
I should forever have the world's applause.
For the lists of death would be decreased.

SER. Therefore you think you saw my father there?
Ah no you didn't. He surely is some old
Deceiver, one who wished to be supported;
But not by me. When I've celebrity
No imposter shall find his way beneath
My wing. O yes, I'll win fame;
The earth shall sing my praises; you know not where
My life will end.

PIER. I do, in faith, from what I heard about you

I'm sure I know.

SER. Where, O where, I will let you share
My glory.

PIER. If in this tenor you continue and in
Truth have talent for a painter,
And exercise your talent properly,
Your life will end—at death,

SER. Why that's the place where only kings
And artists meet; then can I not see you there?
'Tis pity, but I must go. (*Going to the door.*)

PIER. Wait, will you not give to me that name,
That name that shall so shine in the artists'
Firmament and be upon the heavens
Inscribed in golden characters.

FRAN. What avail to know that name at once?
Wait till it ranks with Vandyke or excels him.

SER. But I will let you know, 'tis Maurice Juile,
My master, M. Louis Chesin, I go—

*Having passed out he immediately returns with two
umbrellas.*

SER. Ah, ha! At last I've found it, good bye,

PIER. But those *two* umbrellas, *one* is yours.
Here, I'll pick it out for you.

SER. Ah no! how can he tell which is his own
If he have them not both before him?
So I'll bring him both.

PIER. Well, did you ever hear the like?
You're a smart one and in return for these
Umbrellas may we ask from you a song?

SER. Certainly you may; but now I'm
Very busy and hardly have time to gratify you.

PIER. Ah ha! are you quite sure you have no cold?

SER. Yes indeed; mademoiselle, have you ever
Seen me with a cold?

FRAN. Heaven could not be so cruel; but
Where did you cultivate your vocal powers!

SER. Like my painting talents they are innate
Within me. But (*in a pitying tone to Pierre*) can you
[sing?

PIER. I am renowned for that both far and wide.
I sing the gentle zephyred waves to slumber.
But if you have no cold and can parley
Here so long, we are waiting for your song.

SER. Yes, that's right; keep waiting for my song.

PIER. Sister, I am very anxious to hear from you.
Do not derogate your powers; but give
Me a lightsome, thrilling, gladdening tune.

FRAN. That I will, my brother, listen Maurice.

SONG.

It was on a summer eve,
Twilight had donned its robe,
The songsters had begun to weave
Their songs for sad Nio'be.
Their queen the nightingale was there,
A question to propose:
This question to propose:
Who can with me in song compare,
No matter what you've chose.
They all agreed. The woods full soon
Began again to ring,
And then this new and novel tune
The nightingale does sing:
(*The Servant rushes out.*)

"I am the queen
Have always been
La—la—li—lo—la—
The glistering, glittering glances
Of the pearly dew drops at me,
Keep pace with their fairy dances

At my entrancing melody."

The sparrow next

With panting breast so sings:

"God is my help, my help he is,"

Then quick the whip-poor-will broke in,

In plaintive cadence to begin:

Whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will

If he be guilty of ill

And—

*The voice of an abductor in the garden imitating that of
the mother cries:*

Pierre!

FRAN. (*Starts.*) Pierre, mother is calling you from the
garden run out and— (*Exit Pierre.*)

(*Going to the door that leads inward she says:*)

That's quite strange, mother in the—

*Nearing the door, two men seize her and take her out, in a
moment Pierre returns and says:*

Francis! ae, mother is not—what, gone

In the dining room— (*Follows out of the same door.*)

*Abductors are then seen in the part of the garden near
the window with Francisque in their arms. She cries:*

Mother! Pier— (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

Studio of Louis Chesin. His servant meddling with
unfinished painting of Francisque.

SER. Now who is that lady going to be?

Indeed, it is true the monsieur did it;

But still I see it yet does lack expression.

Why! did I not see that person but short

Time ago? here! great judge, when?

Before breakfast, no, before dinner, no,

Ah yes, after supper, I see; her name

Mademoiselle Dessigniers, why in the name

Of all artists did I not see her first

Before my supper and as I'm a Vandyke,

If he did not paint her from his heart,

Took straight her likeness from his memory,

And set it there on canvas! I wonder if her

Likeness for him is the same as his

For her. Well judge, you cannot help it now.

But my demoiselle, vous etes tres belle

Comme (*knocking at the door*) say is anybody there?

Now I know I'm getting to be a painter

Like Monsieur Chesin, I feel the frenzy

Now creep over me as if I knew the art.

Why didn't I think I heard a knocking?—

Now a picture like that is very easy

For him to write down, because, you see,

He has painted it already and is

Only copying it—from his memory.

Why, I almost think that I could do it.

Now, if I was to put the touch to that, (*mixing paints*)

And tone it up fine (*taking up the brush*)

Monsieur would pat me with his fingers, so,

And praise me for my skill in these arts,

And call me a genius; yet, I don't know

Whether he is anxious for me to touch

This lady, but that's not worth a whiff of wind,

So I'll try it (*Taking up the brush.*) (*Knocking.*)

Oh! (*Running to an arm chair he takes up a paper.*)

Again impatient knocking, then Enter Marie.

SER. (*Getting up.*) Pardonnez moi. I was so busy

I couldn't hear you knocking.—Come to get your

likeness painted; you'll make a fine one—bust

Bust like Venns and form like Juno,—

MAR. Is your master in?

SER. (*Reflecting.*) Wait, let me consider—
Yes, I believe he is. Will you retain
Those clothes or do you want flounced draperies?

MAR. You will go and tell him I want to see him.

SER. Certainly, what name? Marie——

MAR. What, fellow, do you——

SER. I say is it Marie Antoinette——

MAR. Will you—— (*Louis enters.*)
(*Servant as if he intended to go for him.*)

SER. Ah, monsieur, a lady to see you. (*Exit.*)

LOU. Well, my good woman, what can I do for you?

MAR. Oh sir, I—I——

LOU. You are nervous, madame take a little
Water. (*Goes for the same.*)

MAR. (*Aside.*) My husband—no, I'll not implicate—
(*To Louis*) I have some intelligence to give
That pains me sorely; but which must be known.

LOU. Then, I pray you, tell it not to me.

MAR. I—you know Francisque Dessigniers——

LOU. Yes, yes, what of her——

MAR. Last night she was abducted——

LOU. What!

MAR. Abducted,

LOU. Abducted!

MAR. Aye and I came here to tell to you
Where she is held.——

LOU. Tell me first who the wretches are.
I would——

MAR. I say 'tis not hard to rescue her,
When I tell you how you may.

LOU. Quick! what of the villains that——

MAR. The villains laid much upon the distance off.
Her guard, a half witted fool, half armed.
You know the Bois de Boulogne.

LOU. Yes, yes, what of it,——

MAR. Wait or you'll spoil all. It behooves you not
[to go at once.]

LOU. I must, I will, my good woman, tell me——

MAR. For her safety do I restrain you. Persist
And you full sure prevent her liberation.

LOU. God be thanked that I now have the power
To rescue her at all, through you; my friend
Tell me how you came to inform me,
You have a good heart; God bless you for it.

MAR. I'm blessed in being able to assist her.
In being an instrument in the rescue,
Of one of those who saved my only child.
Know that she and her folks did protect
My Therese when she upon the streets was
Struck by cowardly drunkards and though
I would have helped her, through humane reasons
Yet their act, so bonded me to them, [solely;
That in gratitude I would die most
Willingly were such act conducive
To her safety. It is not well for you
To go at present, you must wait awhile.

LOU. I thank you from my heart that you come to
Me and apprise me of her danger.
You say on the Bois de Boulogne——

MAR. Yes, take it half its length from Couvrille's
Then to the right at a distance you will
See a hut. A booby lives in there.
Ask him for the next house on the road,
He will lead you to your place.

*She turns thinking she heard a sound, then the door
opens and Servant enters hurriedly.*

SER. Did you call me, Monsieur?

LOU. Call you, no, neither anyone else;
When I want you, I'll tap the bell.

That will do. But wait——
As long as you are here tell me who were
At home last night at M. Dessigniers,
Was not the Madame in?

SER. Yes, they were all there and a right jolly time
They all had too, myself included.
We sang and joked and——

LOU. Did you—well—that is all. (*Exit Servant.*)
You see they were all together. The rascals
Must, have been cute indeed, to so decoy
Her away from them.

MAR. Yes and to get her just as slyly,
You have but to follow my directions
And in a short time she is yours again;
But pray tell me who that fellow is
Who hears his name when he is not called?

LOU. Indeed he is an eccentric person
And were it not for his redeeming trait
I could not tolerate him.

He is an apt workman.

My dear friend tell me how may I thank you?

MAR. That I will, Monsieur, give ear.
Let no one know in any way whatever
From you, how you received your information.
Keep this well in mind; else know that she
Who saved for you your own, will be murdered.
That is all—adieu. (*Exit.*)

LOU. What can she mean?

Well poor woman, I'll endeavor to aid
Against any evil that might befall you:
It is the mother of that little girl
Beaten by those drunkards. Pierre told me
That her husband was of ill repute.
She said not yet to go, (*Looking at his watch.*)
But I cannot wait much longer.
Ah! I see it; for some reason of his own
The dog took her away; no doubt obtaining
All knowledge from his unsuspecting wife.

(*He taps the bell.*)

(*Enter Servant.*)

Here Maurice, haste to M. Dessigniers'
And tell him to hurry here and—but no—
It is not necessary—I'll go myself,
That will do— (*Exit Maurice*)
I'll rescue her (*Looking at his watch.*)
May God bless the poor woman, who has
Perilled her life to save my dear Francisque,
For gratitude because of her Therese,
If that demon of a husband touch her
He shall rue it sorely.
And now Francisque, 'twill not be long before
I see you. Thank the Almighty Father.
Exit hurriedly.

SCENE III.

Scene same as Scene II. Act II.

SER. I wonder what he meant by running off
In such mad haste; he ran off as if
A hundred creditors pursued, who if they
Should chance to catch him would eat him without
seasoning.

No, all my conjecturing is vain,
I may with reason doubt whether he is
Searching for his head—as by his actions
'Tis evident that he has lost his head,
Or for a lost comet.

And allowing that he finds that and his head
Is in good order found and without damage,
When he comes home brings he his tail behind him.
That's the momentous question, and if he does,
When he does tell his tale, the tale will so
Tell on me, even as did the tale of William Tell.
But telling the truth of my opinions, I do
Not believe that he's running that *comet*
Nor its *head*, nor its *tail* nor anything
Appertaining to that comet at all;
But he's made a mistake in that picture
Which he would rectify not with a comet
But by means of his beautiful Francisque.
If he had asked me—

(*Knocking at the door.*)

SER. Stay out or come in,
I don't care a pin.

(*Enter Pierre.*)

PIER. Quick, where is your master? where is Louis?

SER. Now, wait a minute, not so fast. Do you
Want Louis, we have not got them—only francs.
Do you think we are gold mines?

PIER. I meant Louis Chesin; but how should you

SER. By your telling me, Monsieur. [know.

PIER. (*Angrily.*) How can I know where your master

SER. By my telling you, Monsieur. [is?

PIER. Well—be quick about it—hurry.

SER. He is not here.

PIER. You fool, I see that, but where is he?

SER. He is—away from here.

PIER. (*Conciliatingly.*) What did he say?
Maurice, you should tell me.

SER. Ah! that's the kind of question to be answered.
He told me to tell you—nothing at all.

PIER. Good heavens! it is indeed so—

He told you to tell me nothing of it.

He felt—he knew—that I was coming.

SER. Yes, he—he—he, why man! what are you
Talking about? he told me to go to you—

Would he have said that if he felt, if

He knew you were coming here—

And tell you—

PIER. (*Catching him.*) Tell me, tell me what? quick—

SER. Tell you nothing; for he called me back—

PIER. (*Releasing him.*) What do you mean, what do
[wish to say?

If you know anything for heaven's sake
Out with it. You know what he has done?
He has taken off Francisque.

SER. Ha! ha, that's a dodge for an elephant.
Not me the painter. I swear it's false,
For I saw him run off alone.

PIER. You did! what direction did he take?
How long ago and why—

SER. Don't be too fast, please, I can't think that way.
Take it coolly and I'll tell to you the whole affair,
A little while ago, there was a woman
Here, with Monsieur she held a conference
Then she left looking quite sad indeed,
In a few minutes he called me to him
Where I found him pacing up and down
And shot this out at me;
Here Maurice! make haste to M. Dessigniers
And tell him to hurry here and—but no
It is not necessary, I'll go alone (*mocking*) that will do
And so I was excused not only from his
Room, but from going to you and now
If you have sense left, which does not appear,
Consider whether he run off with her or not.
It is the height of absurdity to think
As you have done.

PIER. The woman was the cause of this.
What news was there, could stir to such a pitch,
As to make him speed headlong out?
God be thanked it's not what I have thought.—
And not have time to wait for me
To come, for it is evident he wanted me,
My friend did the two confer for any
Length of time?

SER. Not more than fifteen minutes, ten of which
It took her to begin; this I know
For he brought water to her which does mean
That she was faint, which argues she had hard time,
And trouble to commence, what'er she said.
But did you say your sister had gone off?
Ah, in faith, I can solve the problem.

PIER. You! well what have you to say?

SER. If she is gone that woman sure knows where,
For she looks to me a broomstick witch.
By that same power of divination, she knows
My master would fain have her for wife
And so she tells to him, where he can find her.
To make his certain suit much surer yet.
Ah! it takes me to see this thing.

PIER. (*Thinking.*) That's very possible, but why do
You think this?

SER. My friend, seek not to become wiser, for
Though fools may of wise men learn, yet learn
Not too much, practise temperance at all hours.

PIER. You conceited fool. I'll—

How can I break this news to mother?

I'll remain here a little longer.

He may by that time return, I hope he may.

SER. I too, for I've something very important to—

(*Maurice enters breathlessly.*)

MAR. Has he gone yet—if not—tell him—to—

PIER. How! madame, is that you!

SER. He went immediately after you, ha, ha,
After you! I meant after the Demoiselle Dessigniers.

MAR. God be praised that he is gone in time—
What do you know about Miss Dessigniers?

PIER. My good madame, will you not tell me why
You sent him away and where? Francisque
Is nowhere to be found and suspicion
Very grave, I had harboured of him.

MAR. Dear sir, cast all such unworthy thoughts from
He is pure and chivalrous and she, [you.
The rival of the whitest, purest lily,
By chance I heard who her abductors were,
Vile wretches, who for a bar of gold did it.

PIER. But why did you not inform me of it,
Although I bless you as it is.

MAR. Because the lover's joyful task it is
To bring deliverance to his lady love
To win the prize, no matter from what quarter,
As his love for her were still unshaken,
Were the solid globe to fall upon it.
Fear not, he'll rescue her as sure as earth
Does move about the glorious magnet orb.

PIER. But I must go too, tell me the way.

MAR. No it were even now too late to say it,
Did I wish. From the house where she
Is held her Louis will liberate her.

PIER. God help him in it. If you will not tell me
I'll for home, (*Aside*) to comfort mother.
Thank God my suspicions are unjust,
Now do I feel his heart's nobility,
Which heaven forbid that I should ever doubt
Again. What heinous crime has been concocted
To embroil the one, and destroy the other,
May heaven frustrate, and hurl back on its author,
Adieu. (*Exit Pierre.*)

SER. That was quite good in you I must admit.
You had something important to tell to him
As I perceived by your breathless haste.
What do you wish to do about it?

MAR. You may tell him—but never mind
Don't trouble yourself too much, or you'll get warm.
Exit.

SER. Well—now— (*Talking to the picture.*)
Did any one ever see the like of this?
She run off! he must be crazy. Francisque
The angel run away even with Louis—
Very foolish of him. But what are these
Happenings, my head is in a whirl,
The first time it has ever been so,
May it safely issue from her eddies.
The demoiselle to be abducted!—The cur
That did it should have his *tail* cut off.
The whole affair seems like a drama and I
An actor in it, than real life's proceeding.
Abducted!—The lover with risk rescues her,
And urged to do so by an old witch;
The brother of the girl a goblin too,
And then they all live happily, hurrah!
I reckon I'll live happy too, so

(*Looking at painting.*)
Don't talk too loud or you will disturb me.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Scene a road running from the Bois de Boulogne.
A bridge at the further end of the stage.

LOU. It is the house, methinks. I shall knock.
(*He knocks.*)

PEASANT. (*Within.*) Hey there, stop it. Don't you
[know I'm a sick man.

LOU. Haste! open your door, I need your help

PEAS. Do you? But it's time all honest folks
Were now in bed, and as, the world knows me
For an honest man, you'll find me there.
I'm very sick. Please pass on.

LOU. My good fellow, let me persuade you quickly
To come out and aid me in a sacred work, [long.
That pays you more than you have seen a fortnight

PEAS. O yes! my thief, I'll come and help you find
The little that I have. No sir, not so
Long as I'm a sick man, no sir.

LOU. How can I draw him from his hut?
He thinks I'm a robber; fool, but gold.
Gold will remove that obstacle.

(*Rattling gold coins in his hands.*)

Do you hear that—do you?

If you will hasten and join me, much gold—
Look—listen (*jingles*) do you hear? all of this
Shall be your pay, quick—open the door.

PEAS. Eh! wait, I'm coming down to you.
(*Peasant comes with a pistol.*)

Is your gold hard and will you give me much?
Louis gives him hand full.

Take that and if you serve me as I wish
More gold shall you receive.

Peasant takes the money in his hut.

And now promptly show the road to me
Which leads to your nearest neighbor's hut.

(*Peasant speaking quickly and pointing*)

Go up here, down there, round the—

LOU. Hold fellow—
Begin again and more explicit be.

PEAS. Well then, straight up this road you go d'ye
Till you fall against a fence, d'ye see? [see?
And then the road to the left you take, follow
This road up to a muddy river, d'ye see?
Well on the bank of this river sits your
Shanty; a dirty old place she is, you see?
D'ye see now, really?

Glances at his hut.

LOU. Yes—I fear some one may come this way
And if you diligently keep a watch,
Your now rich pay shall still be doubled. Accept?

Peasant extends his hand.

Then stand here and if you see one approach
Sound this *larum* once and I return.
But listen; you'll be very careful to do
Only what I have said. If they present
To you some money, you would reject it
Would you not? (*Peasant gruffly.*)

PEAS. No, guess I won't; I'd chuck it in
His head, I'm no traitor for your cause.

LOU. That's right, my Cicero, you don't reject it,
But you chuck it in his head, now don't forget!

Exit.

PEAS. Throw me all your money, if I forget.
Now there's nothing mean about that fellow.
He gave me more gold than I have saw.
He is a gentleman I know; but I
Wonder what his case may be so late.

Is he one of them—pshaw—no—
What a fool I be—he don't look nothing
Like them, for they stealed by, just like villains,
And this one—I wonder if he would come back,

He tries the whistle. He waits.

Pshaw, just as I expected, I'll never see (*He goes to his
hut.*)
(*Coming back.*)

PEAS. Oh, I knew he was a gentleman,
For look at all that shining gold he gave.
But he don't know as much as I about them,
For if he did, he would have left the purse
With me. I know them fellers there are robbers;
Because they sleep in the day time like that
Old owl I used to have, who stole at night
And slept all day, while honest men did work.
Whist, methinks I heard people coming up—
It is good they passed not this way; for they would
have got a fearful fright; I would have fought them
like a cat and show their body to this rich fellow,
who would have showed to me some gold, eh! But
what's he doing up at that house, no pretty gals I
know, because there's nothing but an old hag there,
and I know he don't want that pretty beast. But he
better be more kearful with his money, if he gone into
that house. (*Walks up and down.*)

It Lightens.

Oh!—This will be an ugly night and if my friend
you do not haste, a washing you will get, not much
like that you get at home.

Lightning and Thunder.

Whew!—Can't stand this much longer,
Not for all the gold he's got; nor will
He have much left, if he went to the place

(*Looks at the hut.*)

That I saw those rascals the other night
Go to. Ah, it's a good thing they didn't see me.
Ah! I know a thing or two—oh!— (*As it thunders.*)
I can't stay here any longer (*Going to the hut.*)
But perhaps he has gotten into
Trouble there. I warned him though and 'twould

Take more money than he's got to tempt
Me to that witch's hole. Why did he not
Listen to me; if he don't come back
I'll be cheated of more gold that he has.
I wonder if mine be safe (*Going in.*)
It's a big sum and somebody might have (*coming back.*)
No one will get at that; not while I be
Sick; ah! ha! I'm a cute one. If I did not
Say that, they would come in and rob me soon.

Thunder and Lightning.

Oh! — I see how I can make him come —
He cautioned me to whistle this, if I
Should hear any one approaching; now I
Not only hear, but see some one approaching
And mighty quick and if he takes not care
'Twill reach *him*, as soon as *me*;
But he wanted me to warn him first,
So I'll let him know it's coming on
And from what direction (*Pointing up.*)
(*He whistles then sees him coming.*)
Ah! here he comes, with something in his arms,
A woman as I live. (*Lightning and thunder.*)

Enter Louis bearing Francisque.

LOU. Go a little in advance—haste!
And prepare for reception of a guest.
Peasant has crossed the bridge, when it is struck by lightning. They, being in the middle, go down into the stream and are separated. The peasant is thrown to the ground, partially stunned.

PEAS. Help, help. I'm killed! whew! (*Rising.*)
What an escape.—where are they? I, the
Only one. Suppose they say I threw
Them in to get his money.
My! I must get *him* out, *she* hasn't got money.
So I'll pull *him* out, *he'll* pay me for
Saving him from death. He's stunned now.
He pulls Louis out.

Here, there you are—I'll now soon revive him.
Poor girl! it's a pity indeed and I don't
See her neither. Any how it's no use
Rescuing her, it's *he* that's got the money.
He's the one (*Drags him into the hut.*)

Robespierre comes from the same direction as Louis, and in his haste nearly falls into the stream.

ROBE. Hell and furies!! this is the work of that
Odious, hell-born fiend; he thought to escape
Me thus; but I shall seek from pole to pole,
From East to West, from sea to sea, to force
From his embrace, his beloved wench,
Kick his accursed carcass and pour out
On his infernal head cutting maledictions.
Cursed be his soul and forever lost,
That the black devil cheats me in this way;
The wood is dense before me, might as well
Stone-blinded see the treasures 'neath the earth.
They may have gone here or by that way;
Zounds, if luck would only let me catch
That hound,—I'll pursue—quick—

He staggers at the sight of her body, which he clearly sees from his position.

Ha! but what! a body, is it hers?
Is it hers! It is by heaven, it is.

Rushes up the bank and comes out on other side.

Is she dead? (*Pulling her out and looking.*)
She is. Ha! you perished
As did your cursed sire; by my hand.
It was I that did stab him, ha! ha!
And for his gold, did I do it. Then were
My plans to get the longed-for wealth frustrated
Nevertheless, revenge was my reward.
Now, again have I been foiled at my
Attempt; and again am I revenged.

It now remains to deal with this Chesin.
Shall I kill him, no! 'twould be a blessing
On him not a curse; though then he would be
Lost; yet, would I feel, the deed would move
This dire and grievous sorrow from his heart.
Ha! ha! where now is your dear Francisque?
I'll let him live, to feel it; where.
Francisque; 'tis now almost as well as I
Could wish; your lover has you not; but will
Live forever, to deplore his cursed fate.
'Tis true I have you not and thus not
The riches coming with you but ha! *he* is
Cheated of you, *he—he*, the dog.
I am revenged now to my hearts content.
I have drunk the sweeter wine; and Chesin
And the Dessigniers, although affluent now,
Are compelled to drink the bitter dregs.
But why, the dog, her lover, did he run?
From fear of this, or my avenging hand?
The coward, I did not think before he was
Of so currish a nature; yet perhaps
I wrong the fool, he may have been rescued.

Going to the hut.

Oh, 'tis useless, that fellow to rescue to one?
He's huddled among his clothes in some further
Corner of that hole, crying for help.
I guess he was washed away before I came.
No matter, he's hardly worth a thought.
Ha! ha! it lies with me to bury you.

Thunder and Lightning.

What would they say to that: Robespierre, the devil
To consign their angel spirit to her
Last resting place? and peacefully (*Ironically*)
Shall she rest where I—pshaw—
This is the burial you receive.

Pushes her into the water.

SCENE II.

Same as Scene I. Act I.

PIER. No grievance could be greater, calamity
No worse, than this. O Lord help us to bear
Thy affliction and in pious thought
Seek solace for thy heavy visitation.
Hard it is to bear, indeed, and mother
Bows beneath this sorrow as beneath
A load too hard to bear. For nature does not
Aid her; does not vouchsafe a tear
To relieve somewhat the mourning of her heart
Incapable of greater grief;
And moisten the intenseness of her woe.
But she sits brooding, silent, o'er her troubles
With that stony stare, that rends my heart
With inexpressible pity.
But it is denied her. Ah, me! I fear
Evil consequences may arise
Which might end in—no, no, the word
Is too horrible for utterance;
Such thought too terrible for entertainment.
God has taken Francisque
For himself; may he spare us mother.
O God! who hast bereaved us of Francisque
And who hast borne down this sad affliction
On us, lighten now, I entreat thee,
Father, lighten thou our griefs and pains.
Send consoling comfort to her, bowed down
By care and anguish; and in thy endless mercy
Treat with us.
Oh! that I might ease her of her pain
And alleviate her suffering—
But here she comes.

I must seek to rouse her from this
State of deep despondency.

Enter Mother.

Pierre leads her to a seat.

PIER. Mother, we'll have a visitor to-night,
He may come very soon.

MOTH. A visitor?

PIER. Yes, can you not divine him, whom I mean?

MOTH. Louis, but he will find her gone, gone.
Oh, Francisque, Francisque, come back to us
We cannot live without you; our lives
Are interwoven with your own; Pierre!

Catching hold of him.

PIER. Mother, take a little water.

MOTH. Ah! that's better.

Poor Louis, how he must suffer!
To be snatched from death to be rescued
To happiness and life and joy out of
The pit dug by the rascal to destroy—only to die.
But to die by God, not by man.
'Tis good, I am resigned. I must hear
Again, and from Louis' lips the sad tale;
It comforts my weary soul.

PIER. God will send consolation.
Mother, the poor fellow has been ill
And acts strange things; so forbear
To question him more than the incident
That you have alluded to, 'twill do
No harm to ask him as far as that;
But much good and comfort, dear mother.

MOTH. Dear boy he is so worthy and so grand.
In what spirit does he cede his treasure?

PIER. 'Tis come quickly to his heart. The man
Did tell me, who did pull him out, that
Though stunned and bleeding, he wildly searched the
As if in quest of what, he knew not; [air,
And it even moved that boor to pity,
When in delirium he cried her name,
And as an infant wept because she came not.
So you can infer his mind from this.
God help and comfort him.—Some one comes.

Enter Louis accompanied by servant.

SER. (to Pierre.) My master is not quite well, take
Be not surprised at his behavior, [care
Humour him in every thing. (Exit.)

PIER. Well Louis,
Old fellow, we are well pleased at your visit
And I can not but congratulate you
On your incomparable servant.
I would fain ask, if his fingers ever
Emulate the lightning of his tongue?
For then there were result to be admired.

LOU. Indeed he fingers well and plays not.

PIER. And so he works?

LOU. Aye, the stringless lute.

MOTH. Pierre, do not thus continue.

LOU. No, no, or else you end.

PIER. End! End what?

LOU. The part that went before.

PIER. True, true,
And therefore we will not continue.

LOU. Why then we end. And when we end, we stop.
Stop speaking, moving, drinking, looking, all.

And so 'tis done. For after the end,
We breathe not, nor exist, nor are we.
Therefore speak on,—have you yet heard Maurice
My servant say, he will be a painter?
What do you think? He has a good form himself
And not a bad subeject.

PIER. (Aside) For an asylum.

LOU. I do not know where he derives his whims,
He is so eccentric and steeped way through
His soul in proverbs, gotten by inspiration
As thus; "at what you look you see;" or thus;
"Plant not your grain in the Arctic ocean,
Or sow your seed in the winter's snow."
Once he said; "wish and you shall have."
He is of curious stock I dare tell.

MOTH. Nor can I make him out. What
A compound of wit, impudence and vaunting
He was composed of that even of last week
When he was here.

LOU. When he was here! What business had he

PIER. Do you not recall to memory [here?
The umbrella you sent him for; which
You had forgotten here?

MOTH. The night that Francisque sang so sweetly
[to us.

LOU. (Reflecting.) Francisque, Francisque—Who is
[Bursting out laughing. [that?

Ha! ha! ha! why are you hiding?

Come Francisque let's go—

MOTH. God, God! he's mad!

LOU. (to Pierre) Do not keep her any longer, Dear

Francisque (raising his voice) come Francisque!

PIER. All right Louis; but now sit down.

LOU. (Excited.) Francisque! you give her to me,
(Catching Pierre.)

Where have you hid her?

MOTH. (Crying.) Louis, Francisque is not here.

LOU. What! out of the house! why don't
You bring her in? Francisque I'm coming.
I'll help you. (Rushes madly out.)

MOTH. O Lord! help me now, I pray. Quick—
Pierre, follow him, that he do no harm.

Pierre hurries out.

MOTH. What new calamity is this, Louis mad!
Poor boy, what an ending for them both,
How different! Oh! how different from what I had
Pictured for the future, Louis and Francisque
The happy man and wife—and Pierre—my heart
I feel as if 'twould burst.
O God! where will this end if—I—feel faint,
My heart—O me! it cannot last longer.
I feel my end is drawing near, but Pierre,
What may he—not do, God protect him
From all evil.
O Father, how did I merit this. Francisque
My bird—dead! my husband foully murdered!
Louis—raving mad! and what may—further come,
God—the prophecy—that witch—Pierre—

She falls DEAD.

Pierre rushes in.

PIER. Mother you are unwell (running up) Mother,
Mother! Speak! My God! She's dead.

SCENE III.

Scene, Louis' Studio.

Louis mad, rushes in.

LOU. No, no, she has concealed herself from me.
They have not hidden her. She wishes only
Me to find her, yes, indeed, I'll hunt
The world over, if I find you not before,
Pshaw! listen! she directs the way—
Speak a little louder (roaring) louder, I cannot

Distinguish what you say, there is so much
 Other noise, Francisque, Francisque, are you gone?
 Why (*stamping*) did you drown her voice by your con-
 Noise, now I must seek her without aid, founded
 Without aid! no, no, that old woman,
 Therese, my kind watcher, will help me.
 Here go—what! where are you? I cannot get it.
 It strikes in my heart; it cuts my brain;
 Hangs on my lips; yet, I cannot remember it
 Here, here, you demon, give it quickly back
 Or I'll—'tis good you cowards that you flee,
 They put it in my pocket, where can it be?

Fumbling in his pocket.

To strike a defenceless girl like that;
 You should be hanged and your carcass quartered;
 Quick, quick, do not tempt me thus!
 So; and did they harm you much, my little
 Girl! Come in the garden here and they
 Will see if you are badly hurt. Come,
 They will give you something nice look here.

Searching in his bosom.

What she gave me (*roaring out*) devils, did you steal it?
 Did you? Do not touch it, with your viper's

He finds a handkerchief in his bosom.

Hands, she gave it to me, Francisque.
 Ah! it is charmed, you cannot take it.
 It is from her, you know, Francisque.
 I saw her make it with her own dear hands,
 And give it to me laughing cunningly—
 Pierre, hurry up and bring her with you—
 Yet I don't believe you will find her; for I
 Know where she is but (*reflecting*) cannot think now.
 Heaven, what is it that won't tell me?
 I—I—there (*catching his head*) I have—it's
 Fled again, (*roaring*) come quick; all,
 Pierre, Jean, Maurice catch it, or—

Looking at the picture of Francisque.

He points and says softly.

Francisque, dear Francisque, answer me now.

Softly.

Don't be angry. Oh! you are her sister.
 Are you? And you want me to hunt for her.
 All right immediately I'll do it.

Running around.

No I cannot see her—but don't give up.

About to jump out of a high window.

Did you speak to me? (*Looking back at portrait.*)

No? I thought

I heard you call, shall I call? Francisque,
 Sister wants you, she is asking for you.
 No, no, do not fear, no one will follow
 You, no one shall touch you; one more bridge
 To cross and then we see a little hut.

Getting wild.

There will be a tempest soon Francisque,
 See how it thunders and the lightnings flash.
 Ah, but there's the bridge, now, carefully,
 Hurry, my man, go front and lead the way,

Clasping his head.

My head, God! my head, it cracks.

Leaping forward.

There she lies, so, (*pointing to imaginary stream*) drag
 Quick, there, in the hole, pull! pull! [her out.
 Oh my darling! my darling! could I but lend
 My hand, I'd snatch you from that hole full soon.
 I cannot move—they hold me back—off—
 They pinion my arms behind me, they—off—
 You devils, I'll kill you all. (*Shrieking.*)
 Can you not see
 Her feet crushed there and bleeding between the logs?
 She extends her arms, she implores me.

Leave off Satan, do you not hear her calling
 Me? help! help! heaven save her.

Pointing to the picture.

You will talk to her, will you not?
 Go and help your sister (*roaring*) brute!
 (*Supplicatingly*) My gentle friends,
 I entreat you let me off, won't you?
 (*Loud*) Won't you, you hell hydra.
 (*Exerting himself*) Off—

The form of Francisque appears.

FRANCISQUE. Louis! (*Softly.*)

He turns dumbfounded.

LOU. Ah! my angel! (*drops on his knees.*)

Looking at the Picture.

No, no, be silent listen to her, to my Francisque.
 Do you hear?

FRANCISQUE.

When we parted by the wave,
 God sent forth this decree;
 Francisque the maid for heaven save,
 While Louis for earth must be.

LOU. Oh, no! God revoke it. Francisque,
 Francisque, (*weeping*) let me come to you
 Darling angel let—

FRANCISQUE.

So manfully upon the earth,
 Where is despair and woe,
 Strive on; you'll reach the goal
 And up to me will wing your soul,
 When you own no man as your foe.

Disappears.

LOU. No, come back. Let me see you but once
 More, once Francisque, once—
 What a life here in this desert
 Without you my own; no, it can not be.
 Almighty Father, oh let me die!
 The rich die and kings, why not I?
 How I envy them, how I almost
 Hate them, yes, I *must* die, I curse them,
 Curse the World;—You are without Francisque.
 What! I have not Francisque. What am
 I doing here without Francisque
 Upon this wicked world.
 Oh this mud globe! this ball of foulest things!
 This mass of circles bound to jail you all—
 Ye devilish, strutting serpents, breeding quiet
 In hidden secret your hydal venom to serve
 Each other with, from slyly creeping in
 To hide your odious, reeking, sloppish clay.
 But on whose bosom you do prick a spot
 And cast you one another in, as grim parcels.
 Quick jugulate yourselves, false denizens.
 Spit out—Eve's apple grown to monstrous size—
 Your ocean streams to purge your external of its
 Infectious load; although it roughly pur!
 At touch of such corrupted stuff.
 O thou Sun, thou quickest flashing orb,
 Too pure for the defiant gaze of man,
 And therefore not allowed to taint you with his sight,
 Thou never failing disc of bright effulgence,
 How like this house of wickedness in shape,
 Appearance, form; this compare
 For the wicked and the virtuous bear,
 For as round thy finished circle, glistening
 In its purity is induced to move
 This sphere, base counterfeit of thyself,
 Or like the magnet followed by its kin.
 Thus stand together the evil and the good
 This last even in his very essence
 Doth draw the former on, and *he* alway
 Dogs his footsteps; for the righteous face
 He dare not look upon, but fawning there,

Skulks and sneaks about his heels ; then
 Curriously slinks away. So do they all.
 And this on which we are is the offensive
 Pound for dogs and curs ; for vile reptiles,
 And venom'd snakes ; and mad beasts, quick
 Fall upon each other, devour and feast your greed.
 Now suck your measled bodies ; then pitch
 To ravenous flees your foul carcasses.
 Ugh ! let me crawl from out this stinking mire,
 This sloughy hole, this sloppy earth.—

Then looking at the picture.

Shall I kill me, shall I ?
 Ha ! ha ! I cheat the world.
 I come Francisque.

Stabs himself.

Pierre enters with servant.

PIER. Heaven ! what has he done ?

Servant runs to his master.

SER. Master ! master ! my dear master ! speak !

Rising.

Never, oh, never ! this life he has finished,—
 Has begun another up above.

PIER. O how awful
 Is this sight ! Oh God ! I've seen enough
 To make me till death a raving maniac.

SER. I pray you, take it not thus to heart,

'Twill all end well, when heaven sees fit it shall.
 Know that three score years is but very brief
 Prelude for eternal time in heaven.

PIER. (*To himself.*) No wonder at it.
 These dire misfortunes
 Could kill a *man*, how could she survive
 Their fatal force. Alone, I am alone,
 To wander blindly on through life, to grope
 My solitary way, among this heartless
 World so pitiless, so cold.

SER. Nay, nay, I pray you sir, do not thus
 Take on, let yourself be comforted,
 Why so startled at this change from earth
 To heaven. Is there found in this transition
 Such curdling horror, agonizing throes,
 As rack one often on a bed of sickness,
 Or do they but substitute for grievous,
 Earthly ills and pangs and manifold
 Anxieties of this crossing world,
 The heavenly delight and blissful state
 Of our Master's Court above ?

Sobbing.

God wills it so.

Weeping.

Woe ! my master, woe ! his great love for her.

Pierre broken hearted sits down.

PIER. May it please God, soon to call me hence.

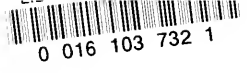





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